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WHEN P STANDS FOR PEANUTS AND PROTEIN

A conversation between Miss Ruth Van Deman, Bureau of Home Economics, Mr. Wallace Kadderly, Office of Information, and Mr. Frank Teuton, Bureau of Agricultural Chemistry and Engineering, broadcast Thursday, February 8, 1940, in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour, by the National Broadcasting Company and a network of 104 associate radio stations.

--ooOoo--

WALLACE KADDERLY:

And here we are in Washington,---Frank Teuton hasn't met with us for a long time. He's connected with the Bureau of Agricultural Chemistry and Engineering. Today, Mr. Teuton and Ruth Van Deman of the Bureau of Home Economics are drawn up here at the microphone ready to talk about one of the best-known food crops of the south.

FRANK TEUTON:

One of the best known food and feed crops of the South, Wallace -- if you don't mind my "amending" that a little.

KADDERLY:

True enough -- nourishment for man and beast --- this crop does furnish both.

RUTH VAN DEMAN:

And if I might "amend" even further, I'd call it one of the best-liked crunchables in the whole U.S.A.

KADDERLY:

Your "amendment" is accepted, Ruth. It certainly would be hard to find man, woman, or child in the United States who doesn't like to crunch peanuts ---

TEUTON:

Peanuts, Wallace, I'm glad you named the name. I was beginning to wonder if this was a mystery crop we were talking about.

VAN DEMAN:

I think we'd have a hard time making a mystery out of anything as cheap and plentiful as peanuts are this year.

KADDERLY:

You're right, Ruth. There is a tremendous crop --- something over a billion pounds.

VAN DEMAN:

A billion pounds --- that's taking in those for roasting in the shell ---

KADDERLY:

And making into salted peanuts, and using in candy ---

VAN DEMAN:

And grinding for peanut butter ----

TEUTON:

And crushing for oil --- not to mention peanuts to eat raw.

VAN DEMAN:

You like raw peanuts, too.

KADDERLY:

Raw? You mean peanuts before they're roasted?

TEUTON:

That's right, Wallace. Maybe it's just an old Southern custom down in the Peanut Belt.

VAN DEMAN:

Mind that you don't get a tummy ache under your own belt from too many raw peanuts.

TEUTON:

I always chew my peanuts well --- raw or roasted.

VAN DEMAN:

Good. That's the way to do with any nuts. They're very rich, concentrated food. They need masticating thoroughly to make them easier to digest.

TEUTON:

We always watch that carefully with the children when they're eating nuts.

VAN DEMAN:

I don't know whether you've happened to see the report of Dr. Booher's work on vitamin B₁, or thiemine. It has some interesting facts about peanuts.

TEUTON:

Peanuts are rich in B₁, aren't they?

VAN DEMAN:

The raw ones are. And even after they're roasted, they rate fair in vitamin B₁, --- better than half of our common foods even at that.

Also from what work's been done so far on vitamin G values, peanuts seem to be very good on that score.

KADDERLY:

The roasted nuts, you mean.

VAN DEMAN:

Yes. But as a general thing, most foods lose some of their vitamin potency when they're cooked or exposed to the air. That's why we say, and keep saying, eat a well-balanced diet, made up of a variety of a variety of foods, some raw and some cooked.

TEUTON:

What you say about eating a variety of foods has a special point in connection with the protein of the peanut. The peanut, as you know, is rich in certain kinds of protein.

VAN DEMAN:

But not a "complete" protein like that in meat, or milk, or eggs.

TEUTON:

That's it precisely. But certain other foods, wheat for instance, have the kind of protein needed to supply what the peanut protein lacks --- to make it "complete."

VAN DEMAN:

So when you eat a peanut sandwich you're mixing your proteins just right.

TEUTON:

Absolutely. And may I put in a word here about my favorite kind of peanut sandwich?

VAN DEMAN:

Certainly. Everybody's entitled to his personal likes about food.

TEUTON:

I like a peanut sandwich made of the roasted nuts chopped up and mixed with a little salt to season and just enough cream or rich milk to hold them together.

VAN DEMAN:

You want some of the crunch left in the nuts.

TEUTON:

That's it.

VAN DEMAN:

There are ways to get crunch even in a peanut butter sandwich. Mix chopped celery with it, or chopeed raw carrot, or apple, or onion, or crisp dill pickle.

TEUTON:

I never thought of that.

KADDERLY:

Or toast the peanut butter sandwich in a sandwich grill.

VAN DEMAN:

Or if you don't have a grill, brown it in a little fat in a skillet on top of the stove.

TEUTON:

All sorts of ways to beat the devil around the bush.

VAN DEMAN:

All you need is a little food imagination.

KADDERLY:

And maybe a copy of that leaflet from the Bureau of Home Economics on "Nuts and Ways to Use Them."

VAN DEMAN:

Yes, that's full of suggestions for using peanuts in hearty dishes --- like peanut and carrot loaf --- and peanut and bean croquettes. And there's no reason why you can't use peanuts just as well as pecans in making hot rolls, or nut bread, or cookies.

TEUTON:

How about pie?

VAN DEMAN:

Yes, pie. You must have smelled that peanut pie baking in our food laboratory yesterday.

TEUTON:

Oh no I didn't. I'd have been right up if I had.

VAN DEMAN:

Mrs. Whiteman followed the same receipt she's given for pecan pie in the nut bulletin. Only she used peanut halves instead of the pecans.

KADDERLY:

Did the peanuts rise to the top the way the pecans do? --- and give that delicious crusty, crunchy effect?

VAN DEMAN:

Exactly the same --- with the egg and sirup like a rich soft custard underneath the nuts.

TEUTON:

I know it's almost like sacrilego here, to turn the subject from peanut pie back to peanut protein as a textile possibility. But I just want to mention one of the interesting new uses for peanut protein that our Southern regional laboratory is planning to explore. Mr. Lynch, who is going to head up the research in the New Orleans Laboratory, showed me the other day some samples of cloth made in England of peanut protein.

VAN DEMAN:

Like the new synthetic fabrics made of milk protein.

TEUTON:

Same idea. --- Some of these peanut protein fibers were mixed with wool like the mixtures of spun rayon and wool.

VAN DEMAN:

It will be interesting to see how they wear.

TEUTON:

They'll have to be out through service tests, of course. But all that's still in the future. So far as I know no cloth has been made of peanut protein in this country yet.

VAN DEMAN:

Aren't they also going to work on peanut oil, in the New Orleans laboratory?

TEUTON:

Yes, they're going to study the processing of peanuts to increase the yield of oil and the quality of the protein.

KADDERLY:

Peanut oil holds up very well in frying, I believe I heard you say once, Ruth.

VAN DEMAN:

Yes, it's excellent for frying potato chips --- any deep fat frying in fact. It's what the chemists call a "stable" oil. The heating doesn't cause it to break down quickly and change flavor. It stands heating so well you can use it over and over again.

But unfortunately there isn't very much peanut oil on the retail market in household size containers.

TEUTON:

Maybe our research can be of some help there. And there are great possibilities in the peanut as a stock feed and a soil builder.

KADDERLY:

The peanut seems to be a many-sided plant --- with quite a future ahead of it. Frank, maybe you will want to "amend" what you said at the beginning and make it a crop to supply food, feed, and fiber.

TEUTON:

That's right, Wallace, maybe I should.

VAN DEMAN:

I still stand with the peanut eaters.

KADDERLY:

Like the boy on the burning deck. Ruth, we respect your courage.

VAN DEMAN:

Never mind about my courage. Just, please sir, would you let our Farm and Home friends know about the nut bulletin, in case they'd like the receipts.

KADDERLY:

Ad lib offer of "Nuts and Ways to Use Them."

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